

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached replacement drawing sheet makes changes to Figs. 13 and 18.

Kindly replace the original drawing sheets including Figs. 13 and 18 with the attached replacement drawing sheets including Figs. 13 and 18.

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 10 and 13 are pending in this application. Support for the amendments to Claim 1 can be found, for example, in original Claim 4 and in paragraphs [0060] and [0099] of the specification. The specification and Figs. 13 and 18 are amended only to correct minor informalities. Independent Claim 12 is canceled without prejudice. No new matter is added.

Claims 7 and 8 are amended to address the claim rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 1 is now the only pending independent claim under consideration. The Official Action rejects independent Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,279,685 to Ivansons et al. ("Ivansons"), or alternatively under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ivansons.

Claim 1 is directed to a tube connecting apparatus. The apparatus comprises, *inter alia*, an electrode section for supplying electric power for heating to a cutting section, a cutting section movement unit, a holding section movement unit, and a controlling section which controls power supply to the electrode section as well as movement of the cutting section movement unit and the holding section movement unit. The controlling section has a non-volatile memory which memorizes information expressing that the apparatus is in a connecting operation state in which the end portions of the cut tubes are being connected. The controlling section judges, when power is supplied, that a reset operation is necessary when the

information memorized in the non-volatile memory is information expressing that the apparatus is in a connecting operation state, and initiates the reset operation during which the cutting section is heated again, the connecting operation is restarted to finish the connecting operation, and an error indication is displayed on the display section.

Ivansons discloses a device for connecting/disconnecting plastic tubes. The device includes a computer 146 said to correspond to the claimed controlling section. Ivansons discloses that the computer 146 activates the device, checks the device status, readies the device for tube loading, and controls a tubing connection/disconnection (see Figs. 29A-C and col. 10, lines 23-30). Ivansons discloses that when tube connection cycle is performed, the next cycle is stored in a non-volatile memory (see col. 11, lines 27 and 28). That is, the computer 146 always alternates the next cycle such that if the current cycle is connect, then next cycle will be set for disconnect or vice versa (see col. 11, lines 28-31). When the device is activated, the computer 146 clears interrupts and reads the next cycle information that was saved in memory from the last successful cycle (see col. 10, lines 35-39). However, Ivansons does not disclose, and would not have rendered obvious, that the computer 146 judges, when power is supplied, that a reset operation is necessary when the information memorized in the non-volatile memory is information expressing that the apparatus is in a connecting operation state, and that the computer 146 initiates the reset operation during which the wafer 16 ("cutting section") is heated again, the connecting operation is restarted to finish the connecting operation, and an error indication is displayed on the display section, as

recited in independent Claim 1. Thus, independent Claim 1 is patentable over Ivansons. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 3, 6-9 and 10 are patentable over Ivansons at least by virtue of their dependence from patentable independent Claim 1. Thus, a detailed discussion of the additional distinguishing features recited in these dependent claims is not set forth at this time.

New Claim 13 is presented for consideration and is patentable over Ivansons at least by virtue of its dependence from patentable Claim 1, as well as for the additional features Claim 13 recites.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: November 25, 2008

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